

## Ken's Corner

### A Strategic Plan for Our Future

I couldn't agree more with Anna Martin's sentiments, expressed in this issue of *Connections*, about the continuing strength of our partnership with ARC and advisory councils. I am proud of what we have achieved together and confident that we can do an even better job of collaboration and outreach to best meet the needs of the people we serve.

As Anna mentioned, I have asked the ARC Board, Department staff and advisory council members to develop a strategic plan on how to strengthen ARC's role in the system as a whole. As they address the question of how to modernize our partnership, I've asked them to consider the following questions:

- On a system wide basis, how can we create measurable standards to ensure quality in programs and facilities and provide the resources required to meet those standards regardless of geographic location?
- How can we ensure that community members across the city have equal access to programs and facilities?
- How can we best develop and implement policies, procedures and standards in alignment with one another to ensure we minimize risk associated with our business to protect our staff, volunteers and the users of our system?
- How can we maximize public benefit by leveraging the financial resources generated by this partnership to better serve our community?
- How should we change so that our partnership is positioned to meet the opportunities and challenges we will face in the future?
- How should the ARC Board be structured to ensure representation of advisory councils positions?
- What organizational structure will allow for better communication and timely resolution of issues?
- How can we best use the expertise of individual advisory councils in programming and operations?

Once the strategic plan is developed, we will update our Memorandum of Agreement with ARC. In the meantime, I've asked the ARC Board to participate in Parks operational and policy issues and help us communicate with member advisory councils.

I look forward to working with you in the coming year on this important effort. Happy Holidays!

— Ken Bounds, Superintendent

## From the Prez

### Modernizing the Partnership



For almost 30 years, communities in the city of Seattle have benefited from a unique partnership between Seattle Parks and Recreation, the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) and the advisory councils. Today, this partnership provides recreation programming for the public

at facilities throughout the city. In the early years of the partnership, combined revenue from advisory council programming was approximately \$200,000. Today, the combined annual revenue is about \$8 million and our 37 advisory councils hire almost 2,200 part-time staff to provide recreation programs to community participants.

Several other major cities are very interested in the partnership that has been so successful in Seattle. Based on the Seattle model, the city of San Francisco is implementing a pilot program to partner with a nonprofit organization to provide programming.

Our Seattle model has worked very well over the last 30 years, and it's now time to modernize it to make sure we continue to meet the needs of our communities for years to come. Ken Bounds has asked the ARC Board, in collaboration with Parks staff and advisory council members, to develop a strategic plan for how to strengthen the role of ARC to be a voice for the system as a whole.

This is a huge project to undertake, and a very exciting one! We are currently putting together a framework for gathering input and developing a tentative schedule for this modernization effort. The modernization plan will be our primary focus as we move into 2004. Advisory council members will be a key element of our strategic planning process. Starting early next year, you can expect to hear from us as we initiate the collaborative discussions that will enable us to develop this plan. Your input is vital to the success of this planning effort.

I'm excited about the opportunity to be a part of the modernization of our partnership, and I look forward to working with all of you as we put together our strategic plan. If you have any questions or comments about this planning process, please call me at 206-725-5726 or email me at [annamartin@earthlink.net](mailto:annamartin@earthlink.net).

— Anna Martin, ARC Board President

## Two Advisory Council Members Win Denny Awards

Seattle Parks and Recreation presented the first annual Denny Awards for volunteer service last month to Starbucks Coffee Company, and three community volunteers, Tim Amen, Bruce Bentley, and Joyce Moty. Amen and Bentley are members of the Green Lake Rowing Advisory Council and Southwest Community Center Advisory Council respectively.

"We couldn't do what we do without the tremendous support of volunteers," said Superintendent Ken Bounds. "These awards are a small token of our appreciation and esteem for the people and companies who help us fulfill our mission to take care of the environment and provide safe and welcoming recreation opportunities."

The Denny Awards recognize and celebrate the contributions of volunteers to the success of Seattle Parks and Recreation parks and programs. In 2002, hundreds of volunteers worked more than 164,000 hours for parks and recreation programs throughout the city, donating the equivalent of \$2.7 million in labor. The Denny Awards are named after David and Louisa Denny, who donated land for the first Seattle park in 1884 (Denny Park).

The award winners are:

**Tim Amen**, Green Lake Rowing Advisory Council, for his 17-year advocacy for and support of youth rowing programs. Mr. Amen has been a member of the Green Lake Rowing Advisory Council since 1986. During this time, he led efforts to create outreach and scholarship programs to involve youth



Photo by Leonard Kong

**Award winners and presenters: Tim Amen, Joyce Moty, Bruce Bentley, Ken Bounds, Cos LaPorta (Starbucks) and Christopher Williams.**

who may not have otherwise tried boating. He was also instrumental in raising funds to replace aging boat equipment and for building repairs after the 2001 earthquake. Mr. Amen is a political science professor at Seattle University specializing in the Middle East.

**Bruce Bentley**, Chair, Board of Park Commissioners, for his longtime support of youth, and parks and recreation programs. He first became involved in parks and recreation programs as a volunteer coach for his son's basketball team more than 10 years ago. He later joined the Southwest Community Center Advisory Council and the board of the Associated Recreation Council. He joined the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners in 1998, eventually becoming Chair. Mr. Bentley is renowned for his superb leadership skills and passionate advocacy for youth programs.

**Joyce Moty**, Friends of Bradner Gardens Park, for her efforts to save a small park in Southeast Seattle from development and develop it into a park. In 1994, the parkland that is now Bradner Gardens Park in Seattle's South Atlantic neighborhood was slated by the City to be developed into housing. Ms. Moty and her neighbors organized and rallied to pass Initiative 42 to prevent parkland from being sold or developed for non-park purposes unless land of equal size and value was acquired in the same neighborhood. In 1997, the City Council adopted the initiative as law. That same year, Ms. Moty helped form the Friends of Bradner Gardens Park and worked to transform the small park into several community gardens.

**Starbucks Coffee Company**, for support of Seattle parks through partner (employee) volunteer contribution and the Neighborhood Parks Grants Program. Throughout the year, Starbucks partners provide hundreds of hours of volunteer service to numerous parks around the city. Activities include park cleanups, planting, and play area building. In addition, Starbucks contributes through its Neighborhood Park Grants Program. Now in its third year, the program supports grassroots volunteer efforts in Seattle parks with 10 \$10,000 grants awarded per year with a total of \$300,000 granted to date.

## Halloween Fun



**Teens in the Denny/Madison After School Activities Program have fun with pumpkins in the buildup to Halloween at Southwest Pool.**

## Special Events

### Thursday, Dec. 11

#### **Christmas Ship and Bonfire at Golden Gardens Park**

Beginning at 9:35 p.m., when the Christmas Ship arrives, keep warm with hot cocoa and cider provided by the Loyal Heights Community Center Advisory Council.

### Friday, Dec. 12

#### **Winter Holiday Party at Magnolia Community Ctr.**

7 to 9 p.m. Create a special card, ornament, or special gift at this fun family event. Stay warm with cookies, hot chocolate, and apple cider. Ages: all. Cost: \$5 per family.

#### **Lighted Pond Walk, Meadowbrook Community Ctr.**

7 to 8:30 p.m. Walk through the paths at the Meadowbrook Pond. Candles in the luminaria will provide the only light.

#### **Ornaments for the Birds at Discovery Park**

Adults, this is a chance to share an adventure with your favorite 4- or 5-year-old friend. Please dress warmly. Ages: pre-schoolers with an adult friend. Cost: \$5 per person.

### Saturday, Dec. 13

#### **Presents to the Park at Discovery Park**

1 to 4 p.m. Plant trees and shrubs that will provide new homes for birds and other wildlife. Please call 206-386-4236 the morning of the walk to pre-register. Ages: all. Cost: free.

#### **Winter Holiday Party at Queen Anne Community Ctr.**

Noon to 2 p.m. Lots of fun, games, activities, and refreshments. Ages: all. Cost: free.

#### **Winterfest at South Park Community Ctr.**

5 to 7:30 p.m. Food, music, and celebration of the season of giving! Ages: all. Cost: free. Note: We need volunteers, so if you can help, please call 206-684-7451.

#### **Pathway of Lights at Green Lake**

6 p.m. Bring the family and join your friends and neighbors for this annual start to the holiday season with a beautiful evening walk around Green Lake lit by more than 4,500 luminaria around the path. Ages: all. Cost: free.

### Saturday, Dec. 13

#### **Christmas Ship and Bonfire at Don Armeni Park**

The ship arrives at 7:05 p.m., and you can get in the holiday spirit and stay warm around the fire, sipping hot cider.

### Sunday, Dec. 14

#### **Christmas Ship and Bonfire at Seacrest Marina**

Camp Long sponsors a bonfire at Seacrest Marina to greet the Christmas Ship at 7:10 p.m. Join us for hot beverages and song!

### Monday, Dec. 15

#### **Christmas Ship and Bonfire at Lowman Beach Park**

Songs and a bonfire. Enjoy luminaria, cookies, and hot chocolate. Ages: all. Cost: free. If you'd like to volunteer to help please call Southwest Community Center at 206-684-7438.

#### **Christmas Ship and Bonfire at Alki Beach**

8: 15 p.m. Enjoy hot cider, coffee, and cookies while you wait for the Christmas Ship to arrive for its visit from 8:30 to 9 p.m. Ages: all. Cost: free.

### Thursday, Dec. 18

#### **Christmas Ship at Sand Point Magnuson Beach**

6:50 to 7:20 p.m. We'll treat you to refreshments, music, and a bonfire, compliments of Laurelhurst and Ravenna-Eckstein Community Centers. Ages: all. Cost: free.

#### **Greeting Cards Workshop at Ballard Community Ctr.**

Make greeting cards at this 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. workshop. This is a fun activity for the holidays. Ages: 5-12. Cost: \$8.

### Friday, Dec. 19

#### **Parents' Night Out at Queen Anne Community Ctr.**

Need to get out and do that last-minute holiday shopping? We'll take care of the

kids from 5 to 11 p.m. Pre-registration required; call 206-684-4240. Ages: all. Cost: \$15 per child or \$20 per pair of siblings.



#### **"Holiday Magic" Party at Yesler Community Ctr.**

5 to 7 p.m. Visit with Santa, decorate your own holiday ornament cookie or make a beaded wreath or candy cane. Ages: 12 and younger. Cost: free.

#### **Holiday Movies, Bitter Lake Community Ctr. Annex**

6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Showing "It's a Wonderful Life" with popcorn and other goodies. Bring lawn chairs or a blanket to sit on. Ages: all. Cost: \$2 per adult, kids free.

#### **Holiday Party at Garfield Community Ctr.**

5 to 7 p.m. We'll provide entertainment, games, prizes, and refreshments-all we need is you and your family! Please pre-register by calling 206-684-4788. Ages: all. Cost: free.

#### **Winter Holiday Party at Miller Community Ctr.**

Includes gifts for needy kids aged 2 to 10, a visit from Santa, music, and snacks. Call 206-684-4753 to register between Dec. 1 and 17. Ages: all. Cost: free.

#### **Holiday Celebration at Rainier Community Ctr.**

6 to 8 p.m. There will be toys for tots, refreshments, and a surprise guest. Ages: 12 and younger. Cost: free.



## Volunteers Help Reclaim a Troubled Downtown Park

By Kerry Lasko, Parks and Recreation Manager

Hundreds of dogs live in condos and apartments in downtown Seattle. Soon they will have a park to call their own in the Belltown neighborhood.

Regrade Park, at 3rd Ave. and Bell St., is about to go to the dogs thanks to the efforts of the Downtown Residents Council, Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA) and other downtown neighborhood volunteers.

This .43-acre park has a long history of illegal and negative uses and has been changed physically four times since 1975 in efforts to encourage positive uses. The Department has removed a shelter and replaced it with a basketball court, installed a play area that was later removed, and built a pass-through window to the adjacent deli only to subsequently brick it over. The illegal activity persisted in the park with no proposals for long-term solutions.

Then the Downtown Residents Council suggested a somewhat radical idea: convert Regrade Park into an off-leash park. The idea caught on quickly in Belltown, and a COLA steward volunteered to organize residents to help take care of the park. The proposal had strong support from the Mayor's Office and Park Board, and in September, the City Council approved an ordinance authorizing an 18-month trial off-leash park.

Thanks to the design ideas and experience of our volunteer stewards, Regrade Park is being modeled after urban off-leash areas in other cities including New York City and Chicago. Seattle's first downtown off-leash park is scheduled to open early in 2004. The effort to reclaim Regrade Park is another example of a successful partnership between Seattle Parks and Recreation and citizen volunteers.



Also scheduled to begin in early 2004 is a new Downtown Advisory Council that will work with other local citizens and the Department to serve our downtown parks and recreation visitors.

## Getting Involved

### Donation to Friends of GAR Cemetery Park

The Friends of GAR Cemetery Park recently received \$2,000 donation from the St. John's Lodge No. 9, a Seattle Masons organization (located on Capitol Hill on Broadway — [www.seattlemasons.org](http://www.seattlemasons.org)). The proceeds will be used to create an interpretive kiosk near the entrance to the cemetery.

### Carkeek ELC Wins Gold!

The Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center (ELC) has been certified at the gold level of the sustainable building rating system called LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. This makes the new Learning Center the highest LEED-rated building in Seattle. LEED is a program of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Key sustainable features and practices at Carkeek ELC include rain water collection, photovoltaic energy, radiant heating, natural daylighting and ventilation and salmon-friendly landscaping. The new ELC opened in May 2003.

The Carkeek Park Advisory Council played a key role during the design process and acted as a fiscal agent for community donations.



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